

Iowa Outdoors
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.com

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Jan. 13, 2004

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20TH ANNUAL KEOKUK BALD EAGLE APPRECIATION DAYS

KEOKUK - The 20th Annual Bald Eagle Appreciation Days is scheduled for Jan. 16 to 18, at River City Mall, in Keokuk.

Wildlife professionals from the Lee County Conservation Board, U.S. Army corps of Engineers, and Departments of Natural Resources from Illinois and Iowa are predicting a good turn-out of eagles and visitors to the event. Some 1,600 students from surrounding schools will be on hand for Friday educational programming relating to eagles and their recovery.

An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 outdoor enthusiasts throughout the Midwest are expected over the weekend. Indoor live eagle programs are schedule at the River City Mall theater commencing 9:30 a.m. Saturday and 10:30 a.m. Sunday until 4:30 p.m. daily. Presenters from the World Bird Sanctuary from St. Louis, Mo. provide a unique live raptor program, hourly, throughout the weekend. Eagle experts will staff spotting scopes at outdoor viewing sites at the Southside Boat Club and Verity Paddle Wheel Museum along the river to observe majestic birds in action.

“It is truly a fascinating sight to witness eagle activity at one of the premier bald eagle viewing areas in the lower 48 continental states. Literally hundreds of our national symbol soaring freely, chasing, fishing, turning about, talon grasping, calling, kurrchupping, and perching somehow lift our appreciation for wildlife and wildlife viewing,” said Pat Schlarbaum, with the DNR’s wildlife bureau.

An all-you-care-to-eat catfish dinner is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 16 at Meyers Courtyard, 629 Blondeau St. in Keokuk. Alumni from the previous years' events are invited to renew friendships and reminiscing about the event.

A news conference is planned for Saturday morning, January 17, at 11 a.m. in River City Mall to discuss 20 years of Bald Eagle recovery, nesting successes, and what the future might hold for this biological indicator species.

For further details contact: Kirk Brandenberger, Keokuk Area Convention & Tourism Bureau 319-524-5599, Tom Buckley, Lee County Conservation Board 319-463-7673, Pat Schlarbaum, Iowa DNR Wildlife Diversity Program 515-432-2823, or Mary Grapperhaus Illinois DNR 618-547-3381.

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CRP BUFFER AND HARDWOOD PLANTINGS PROVIDE MAXIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS

In Iowa there has always been a strong relationship between the people and the land. Over the last few years, Iowans have shown a greater concern for the quality of their environment and their natural resources. This concern is especially strong in regards to water quality.

There are now two ongoing programs through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provide landowners an opportunity to enhance the quality of their property and the quality of the water that leaves their property by planting woody vegetation next to streams and/or rivers. These programs are the Conservation Reserve Program's (CRP's) Riparian Buffer Program and Bottomland Hardwood Initiative.

It has been shown that properly located plant buffers (grass or a mixture of trees, grasses, and shrubs) or tree plantings next to water bodies can reduce soil erosion and moving contaminants, increase wildlife habitat, and improve water quality, said state forester Mike Brandrup.

"Planting forested buffers along streams, creeks and rivers in conjunction with hardwood tree plantings in the floodplain is a great way to promote land stewardship, increase wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and provide future financial benefits," Brandrup said.

To qualify for the Conservation Reserve Riparian Buffer Program a landowner must own pasture or cropland immediately adjacent to a perennial creek or river. If the property qualifies for the program landowners receive cost-share funds to establish buffer plantings, plus an annual payment for each acre in the program for a period of 10 or 15 years. "The forested riparian buffer is the widest buffer allowed under the Conservation

Reserve Program rules and allows a landowner to maximize the area they get into the program, which in turn maximizes their payment and the environmental benefits of their buffer,” added Brandrup.

To qualify for the Conservation Reserve Bottomland Hardwood Initiative a landowner must own cropland that is comprised primarily of wet soils, and is within the 100-year flood plain of a river or stream. If the property qualifies for the program landowners receive 50 percent cost-share for the establishment of trees, plus an annual payment for 14 to 15 years.

For more general information on forested riparian buffers and the Bottomland Hardwood Initiative go to www.iowatreeplanting.com, or contact Forestry Supervisor, Paul Tauke at 515/242-6898 or paul.tauke@dnr.state.ia.us .

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PUBLIC INVITED TO DISCUSS FUTURE CONSTRUCTION OF LOST GROVE LAKE

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will hold a public meeting at 7 p.m., Jan. 28, at North Scott High School, 200 S. 1st Street, in Eldridge. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the public of the DNR plan and schedule to construct a lake at Lost Grove Lake area, Scott County Iowa.

As part of the public meeting and in cooperation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), the DNR is seeking public comments on its proposed plan. Commencing January 28, 2004 the DNR shall receive comments for a 30 day scoping period for the purpose of developing a project Environmental Assessment (EA). The completion of an EA is necessary in order for the Service to meet its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The NEPA requires the draft EA to consider at least two "Action" Alternatives and a "No Action" Alternative. The DNR is seeking comments regarding issues that should be addressed in the EA or additional alternatives that should be considered. The project's "Proposed Alternative" is to construct a 350 acre reservoir which will be approximately 3 miles long. Public access to the lake will include the development of three boat launch sites and eight shore fishing areas. Dam and facility construction is planned to commence by early 2005 and be completed in 2006. It is anticipated to take the lake two years to completely fill. Under the "No Action" Alternative, no lake would be completed and public land would be left in its present condition.

The DNR began purchasing land at the Lost Grove Lake site in 1988 and currently holds title to 1,682 acres. The DNR has taken initial steps to identify possible adverse project impacts. These steps include conducting field investigation for

threatened and endangered species, wetland determination in the proposed lake basin and to identify archaeological resources. A field investigation found no threatened or endangered species present. A wetland determination by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) found no wetlands present. The NRCS is also developing a watershed land use plan in efforts to minimize soil and nutrient delivery to the lake.

The DNR proposes to raise the elevation of 220th Avenue for public transportation. Utility companies have been contacted for the need to move or modify gas and electrical lines traversing under or over the lake basin.

The "Proposed Alternative" (PA) is also being reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This alternative may effect all land in public ownership (1,682 acres) and have the greatest effect to 450 acres. The effected area includes inundating the 350 acre lake basin and earth moving activities associated with borrow areas, road developments, boat launching sites, shore fishing areas and fish habitat areas.

Archeological investigations were conducted on the entire Lost Grove Lake area with emphasis on the most impacted areas related to lake inundation and earthmoving. Initial investigation identified 21 unreported archeological sites and one find spot and evaluated 3 farmsteads sites. Further work was conducted on a prehistoric archeological site thought to be potentially eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Study conclusions recommend that none of the evaluated sites were eligible for the NRHP. The public is requested to inform the DNR about archeological sites, buildings and structures, historic places, cemeteries, and traditional uses of the area that could influence decisions about the proposed project.

Written comments on the proposed plan are welcome and can be submitted to Martin Konrad by traditional mail to: Department of Natural Resources, 502 East 9th Street, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319; or via fax (515-281-6794); or e-mail at: martin.konrad@dnr.state.ia.us. Comments shall be received by February 27, 2004.

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DNR PROMOTES TWO OFFICERS TO DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources hired two law enforcement supervisors to fill positions vacated by retirement.

Rich Jordet was promoted to district supervisor for the 17 county northwest district. Jordet has been a conservation officer for the past 18 years, the last nine as the officer in Emmet County. Jordet replaces Denney Phillips who retired Dec. 31, after 33 years.

Jordet, 48, a Hutchinson, MN, native, said he expects the job to be challenging. "I am looking forward to the change from being a field officer," he said.

Craig Jackson is the new district supervisor for the 14 county southeast district. Jackson has been a recreational safety officer for the law enforcement bureau for the past 18 years, all spent working in the southeast district. Jackson replaces Mike Sells, who retired Dec. 31, after 28 years of service.

Jackson, 51, a Kellogg native, said his challenge is to meet the public need while replacing officers who will soon be retiring.

Mike Ashby, the law enforcement supervisor in north central Iowa, also retired, after 38 years. The DNR has not named a replacement for Ashby.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of January 13, 2004

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Ice conditions vary greatly across the state.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Ice thickness has been from 8-10 inches in most backwater lakes thanks to this last cold spell. Crappie and perch fishing has picked up. Crappies are being caught around the weed beds in **Bussey Lake**, Pool 10. Bass are being caught on tip-ups. Methodist Lake in Pool 10 has been accessible with 5 inches of ice on **Wyalusing Slough** and 8 inches on the lake. Fishing has been fair for bluegill and perch and 11 to 13-inch crappies. Pools 12 to 15: Ice conditions are still questionable. Use extreme caution. In some areas there are 4 to 6 inches, but other areas have only 1 inch, which froze over Friday night (Jan. 9). Test the ice. In Pool 12, crappie and bluegill are being caught in **Kehough** and **Fish Trap**. Reports from Pool 13, **Brown's Lake** anglers are catching crappie and bluegill. Most reports are of small fish but a few good catches are being reported. **Middle Sabula Lake** catches of bluegill and yellow perch are being reported; size is small with a fewer larger fish. **Lower Sabula Lake** reports of bluegill and crappie being caught in water from 3 foot to 24 foot deep, using wax worms. **Green Island complex**, a few fish are being caught in **Sawmill** and **McGanns**. **Michelsons** reports bluegill and occasional crappie are being caught. Pool 14, **Rock Creek area** is producing catches of crappie and bluegill. The morning bite is the best.

North Prairie Lake (Black Hawk): Fishing is good for rainbow trout on small jigs or wax worms. The DNR stocked 1,500 rainbow trout last week to create a winter trout fishery.

South Prairie Lake (Black Hawk): Anglers are catching bluegills on jigs tipped with a wax worm.

Big Woods Lake (Black Hawk): Fishing is fair for crappies on minnows.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at (563) 927-3276.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): CAUTION: There is a big open water hole east and a little north of Buffalo Run that is visible from shore. There is another smaller hole between Templar Park and Marble Beach that is more difficult to see but is big enough to sink a truck. Anglers are finding walleyes way out from Marble Beach and along Reeds Run on the east side of the lake. Some action is also taking place at the north end by Crandalls Beach, Big Stoney Point and Mini-Wakan State Park. Use jigging raps, kastmasters or other lures tipped with minnows, minnow heads or perch eyes, when available. Yellow perch fishing has been slow with some fish being caught on the north end of the lake at Crandalls Beach and Mini-Wakan. Perch are also being caught north of Big Stoney Point. Anglers are catching perch on pilkees and jigs tipped with minnows and wigglers. Crappie fishing out from Angler's Bay Resort is still pretty good.

West Okoboji (Dickinson): CAUTION: There is open water in the Gull Point area. Anglers are still catching bluegills and crappie at Miller's Bay in 10 to 12 feet of water, and a few are being caught at Smith's Bay. Another area to try is Pocahontas Point. Try fishing a little closer to shore. A few northern pike are being caught in Smith's, Miller's and Emerson bays using chubs.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Ice is 4 to 8 inches thick in the bays. The main lake has thin ice and large areas of open water. Anglers are catching a few bluegills, crappies and an occasional walleye at the north boat ramp.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): CAUTION: There is a lot of open water. Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair. Anglers are catching catfish at a fair clip off Ice House Point using wax worms in 20 feet of water. A few walleyes are being caught in the evening hours.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass fishing is good. Yellows are being caught in the west end out from Farmers Beach in 8 to 10 feet of water; around the Island, and Billy's Reef. Use minnows and jigging spoons for the best yellow bass action. Try different spots until fish are located. Walleye fishing is fair. Walleye in the 14 to 18-inch range, with a few larger fish, are being caught while fishing for yellow bass. Fish the sunset to early evening periods for the best chance at walleye.

Rice Lake (Winnebago/Worth): Yellow perch are taking minnows and small jigs. The perch are on the small side, so sorting is required.

Silver Lake (Worth): Yellow perch fishing is fair. Use small minnows and jigs. Sorting is required to get larger fish.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Yellow perch fishing is fair. Use minnows near the dredge cut on the north end of the lake.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at (712) 336-1840.

Southwest

With recent warm weather anglers are reminded to use extreme caution when venturing onto lake or ponds.

Big Creek (Polk): Ice conditions have improved considerably over this past week. However, ice thickness varies considerably over the lake. A few anglers report catching bluegill and crappie in the area near the spillway and some activity in the main portion of the lake.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Ice conditions are questionable. The fish house is available for anglers, although reports are spotty.

Don Williams (Boone): Some bluegill and crappie are being taken. As with other areas, ice conditions are variable.

Hickory Grove (Story): Anglers are picking up a few bluegills and crappies. Some unsafe ice conditions were found.

Viking (Montgomery): Ice thickness varies from 3 to 9 inches. Anglers are catching small bluegills. The better action is toward evening.

Greenfield (Adair): Ice thickness varies from 5 to 7 inches. Fishing is good to for 7 to 8-inch bluegills.

Willow Lake (Harrison): There is about 8 inches of ice. Anglers are catching a few bluegills. Fishing is better toward evening.

Farm Ponds: Anglers need permission to fish on private ponds. Ice thickness varies from 3 to 8 inches. Fishing is good for bluegills and crappies on area ponds.

Three Mile (Union): Fishing is fair to good. Ice thickness is variable, but most areas have more than 3 inches and up to 7 inches.

Criss Cove (Madison) and the smaller county board areas are good for crappie and bluegill.

Slip Bluff (Decatur), **Windmill** (Taylor) and **Fogle** (Ringgold) are all good and have 5 to 8 inches of ice.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, contact the regional office in Lewis at (712) 769-2587.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pool 16 to 19: Anglers are still advised to use caution on most backwater areas of the Mississippi River, Pools 16 - 19. Many areas have only 2 to 3 inches of ice and deeper water areas may have less.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Anglers were catching bluegills last week in Sand Run along the west shoreline. The ice was not in very good condition then. The recent warm weather cannot have helped conditions, use extreme caution.

Lake Geode (Henry): Very thin ice; not safe. Warm weather this week may open it back up.

Lake Darling (Washington): The lake has 3 ½ inches of ice. The ice is not uniform in thickness and the weekend's warm weather has melted the edges away. There are always a few weak spots.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies have been hitting on minnows fished around brush piles and other underwater habitat. The most productive areas have been around Honey Creek State Park. Use caution because ice conditions have been variable.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Conditions are unsafe for ice fishing. Open water areas are still present and ice is extremely variable.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Anglers have been using minnows and wax worms for bluegills and crappies. Most fishing activity has been along the dam. The ice thickness has been about 3 to 4 inches.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Bluegills and crappies have been biting on teardrop jigs tipped with a wax worm. The ice thickness has been 3 ½ to 4 inches.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Use caution and test ice regularly. Ice conditions are variable around 3 to 6 inches throughout the lake, with open water near the dam and Causeway Bridge area on the south arm. Fishing has been fair to slow. A few crappies and bluegills are being caught on ice flies tipped with wax worms and minnows around brush piles. Some sorting required for sizeable fish.

Pleasant Creek (Poweshiek): Fishing has been fair for bluegills, crappie, and perch around the dam. Bluegills are also being caught around the roadbed on the west end. Some sorting is required for sizeable fish. Poor ice conditions near the southwest ramp.

Coralville Reservoir (Johnson): Watch out for poor ice around Mehaffey Bridge and the upper end by old Hwy. 965. Some anglers have been catching a few crappies throughout the reservoir, fishing has been slow. Be sure to use caution and check ice often.

Hannen Lake (Benton): Bluegill and crappie fishing has been fair to slow around the morning and evening hours on jigs tipped with wax worms. An ice fishing tournament is scheduled for Jan. 31 at Hannen Lake, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact Hannen Lake – Benton County Conservation Board for further details, at 319-454-6382.

Rodgers Lake (Benton): Fishing has been fair for bluegills on jigs tipped with wax worms. Anglers are reminded that minnows are prohibited in Rogers Lake. An ice fishing tournament is scheduled for Jan. 25 at Rodgers Lake, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact Rodgers Lake – Benton County Conservation Board for more details, at 319-472-3191.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Fishing has been slow; crappies and bluegills have been caught in late afternoon on jigs tipped with wax worms around brush piles. Anglers are reminded that minnow usage is prohibited. An ice fishing tournament is scheduled for Jan. 31 at Diamond Lake, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Contact Poweshiek County Conservation Board for more details at 641-623-3191.

Washington and Keokuk County Ponds: The larger ponds have about 3 inches of ice. The smaller ponds have about 4 ½ inches but the warm weather has eroded the edges and created weak spots. Also use extreme caution anywhere that the snowmelt has run into the pond.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at (319) 694-2430.

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